INSTITUTE *of*
MUSEUM
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SERVICES

*2004*
Field
Reviewer
Handbook

Conservation
Project
Support

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# Changes to the Conservation Project Support Program Review Process

For FY 2004, the Conservation Project Support (CPS) review process will include an online review system to make creating and submitting your reviews very easy and convenient. We piloted this review method as part of our FY 2003 Learning Opportunities Grant program and it proved to be very successful.

You can now
- Submit your completed Conservation Project Support Grant reviews online;
- Assign scores and enter text for comments through the IMLS e-services web site;
- Print copies of your reviews for your records.

You will be provided with a password enabling you to access the online review system. The applications to which you are assigned will appear on the screen and you will have the ability to type your comments and scores right into each online review sheet. IMLS will also be able to access your online reviews and print them out for use by the peer review panel as well as by all applicant institutions.

IMLS is committed to using this review method for all of our grant programs that require field review. No longer will reviewers have to be concerned about paper review sheets, re-typing the review sheets into a more usable format, trying to type an "x" in check boxes or hoping that a diskette containing the review sheets will open up on your computer. We strongly encourage all FY 2004 CPS field reviewers to use this online review system. Please see Page 13 for more details about how to use this system.

# I. The CPS Review Process

Thank you for offering to serve as a Conservation Project Support field reviewer.  We have selected you to review this year's applications because of your expertise in conservation and collections care issues.

The staff at IMLS has prepared this handbook specifically for field reviewers.  It will provide you with the procedural information you need.  Please use it in tandem with this year's *Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines.*  Even if you are an experienced reviewer, you will need to refresh your memory and note any changes.

Before reading the handbook, please do the following:
■   Read the Reviewer Checklist included in your review package.
■   E-mail IMLS immediately at sshwartzman@imls.gov to verify that you have received all of the materials.

**WHAT IS CONSERVATION PROJECT SUPPORT?**

Conservation Project Support (CPS) is an annual, federal grant program that awards applicants up to $50,000 in matching funds.  The program helps museums identify conservation needs and priorities and perform activities to ensure the safekeeping of their collections.

We fund general conservation surveys, detailed condition surveys, environmental surveys, treatment of collections, conservation research, staff training and environmental improvements.  *Please remember that we will support any type of conservation project if it meets one of the institution's most urgent conservation needs.*

**YOUR ROLE AS FIELD REVIEWER**

We selected you from our list of prospective reviewers because of your technical knowledge of conservation issues and practices.  Your job is to provide the highly detailed, technical field review.

After looking at a select group of project proposals, you will write evaluations and assign corresponding scores.  You must decide if a project seems feasible based on its design, methods, personnel and budget, and whether it meets one of the institution's highest conservation needs.  Each proposal that you read will also be read by two other field reviewers.

The scores given by the three field reviewers will be entered into the IMLS database, standardized, and used to rank the applications.  The top ranked applications will be sent to panel for review, discussion and a funding recommendation.  The lowest ranked applications will not be sent to the panel, but applicants will receive the three field reviews to assist them in deciding whether to re-apply and how to improve their applications.  Applications that are panel reviewed, both funded and unfunded, will receive both field reviews and panel reviews.

**PAYMENT FOR SERVICES**

Field reviewers will be paid a flat rate of $200 for services rendered to IMLS.  You must fax to us your signed contract and completed Automated Clearing House (ACH) form to receive payment.

## THE ROLE OF THE PANEL REVIEWER

Three separate groups of CPS panel reviewers meet in Washington, DC about four months after the start of the field review process to conduct second-level evaluations of all the applications. Our panelists are highly respected conservators and museum professionals. In many cases, we select them because of their superior performance as CPS field reviewers in prior years.

Several weeks before the panel meeting, we send each panelist about 20 applications, each with its three corresponding field review sheets. Panelists use *your* technical reviews (and those of your fellow field reviewers) to help them in their decision-making process. **This makes it essential that you provide a thorough review with helpful detailed comments.**

*Panelists are not asked to do detailed, technical reviews.* IMLS staff and the CPS panelists are relying on you to point out specific strengths and weaknesses of each proposal you evaluate.

During each panel meeting, two panelists present their applications to the full panel, discussing each application and providing funding recommendations. Panelists may recommend funding an entire project or only part of a project; they may recommend against funding a project or propose funding a project with a specific contingency. When further questions arise, the panel may discuss a particular application in greater detail. The IMLS Director takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all final funding decisions.

## FUNDING POLICIES

### ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

You will find a full discussion of project eligibility in Part 2 of the *Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines*. Types of projects that are eligible for funding include

- General survey of collections and environmental conditions
- Detailed condition survey of collections
- Environmental survey
- Environmental improvements
- Research in conservation
- Treatment of collections
- Training in conservation

### EXCEPTIONAL PROJECTS

IMLS supports exceptional projects whose results will have a considerable impact upon the museum field. Applicants may request up to $75,000 for exceptional projects. You should provide the same level of technical review for these applications as you do for all others; additionally, you must consider whether the project will have broad applicability for conservation care beyond the individual museum applicant.

If an applicant requests over $50,000 for a project that will *not* widely benefit conservation care in museums, evaluate the application as you would any other (i.e., *do not* consider it a proposal for an exceptional project). We will ask our panelists whether the project can be successfully completed with no more than $50,000 in IMLS funds.

### EDUCATION COMPONENT

Applicants have the option to apply for up to an additional $10,000 to develop and implement educational activities that relate directly to the proposed conservation project (refer to Page 2.4 of the Guidelines to see what IMLS will fund).   Only applicants that submit a conservation project are eligible to submit an education component.  Applicants that apply for the education component are required to complete a separate narrative and detailed budget as well as required supporting documentation in addition to meeting the requirements for Conservation Project Support.  You, as a field reviewer, are NOT required to review or comment on the education component.  However, we would appreciate any written general comments on any technical aspects of the education component that you feel should be communicated to the applicant.  The education component will not be scored.  After reviewing all conservation projects recommended for funding, IMLS staff will make recommendations to the Director on which education components should be funded. You may refer to Page 5.6 in the Guidelines to see what questions applicants for the education component must address.

### GROUP PROJECTS

A group of museums may collectively apply for a CPS grant as long as each museum individually meets all IMLS eligibility criteria.

### INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Conservation Project Support grant funds are *not* intended to support
- the regular, ongoing operating costs of an institution
- projects whose goals are primarily aesthetic, educational, or exhibition-driven
- projects that are primarily collections management activities
- projects that are primarily international in scope or that involve the reintroduction of species into the wild
- projects for the construction or major renovation of facilities
- the installation of security or fire suppression systems
- the installation or purchase of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems for the *entire* museum
- the acquisition of objects or species for the collection

*Please call the IMLS staff at (202) 606-8539 if you have any questions about a project's eligibility.*

**WHEN WILL IMLS ANNOUNCE THE AWARDS?**

We will announce the awards for this deadline in late April of 2004.  All applicants receive notification by mail, whether or not they have been funded.  You will receive a list of grantees at the same time as the applicants.

**WHAT'S NEW FOR 2004**

- In order to improve the statistical reporting of federal grants and cooperative agreements, the Office of Management and Budget has directed all federal agencies to require all applicants for federal grants to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) number when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003.
- To reduce the amount of application materials reviewers and panelists are required to read, IMLS will no longer accept resumes and company profiles that exceed two pages in length.
- IMLS now requires six copies of the application package, plus the original.

# CPS Reviewer Preparation

**GETTING STARTED**

**Before you start reviewing, read this year's** *Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines.* You *must* understand the goals and priorities of IMLS. Even if you are very familiar with the CPS program, remember that we revise the application guidelines each year; they may have changed in ways that will affect your evaluation.

After reading the guidelines, study this handbook carefully, making sure that you understand your role and the tasks that lay ahead. As you review, try to follow the timeline in the back; these steps are based on suggestions of previous CPS field reviewers. Reviewers tell us that it takes a *minimum* of two hours to evaluate each application, so it's important to stay on schedule. Periodically throughout the review period, scan the list of helpful reminders on the inside back cover of this handbook.

**HOW ARE APPLICATIONS ASSIGNED?**

We organize applications for field review according to three items on the application face sheet:
■ Type of Project
■ Collections Category
■ Types of Materials

We try to match you as closely as possible with applications corresponding to your area(s) of expertise.

Many combinations of project and material types are possible, so you *may* not receive your first choice of projects to review. We have assigned you applications that we believe you are qualified to review (see note below); if you are uneasy about any of our selections, please call us immediately.

*Note: Certain projects, such as general conservation surveys and environmental surveys or improvements, are likely to involve a variety of material types. We assign these projects to field review on the basis of the dominant material; we do not expect you to have expertise with each type.*

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

We will not release your name to the institutions you evaluate. In turn, we ask that you not discuss your assigned applications with anyone else. If you have any questions about an application, please call IMLS; **do not** contact the applicant.

# Application Materials

Each application you receive will contain the following:
■ face sheet
■ project budget
■ application checklist
■ statement of purpose
■ project narrative(s)
■ schedule of completion
■ supporting documents
■ group application agreement, if applicable

*Note: An application is complete only if it contains all of the elements listed above. If any item is missing, please call us immediately at (202) 606-8539.*

We suggest that you read through your applications twice: first, to get a general sense of their content and quality; and second, to evaluate and score them (see the field reviewer schedule of completion on page 22 for the time frame we suggest). Following is a brief description of each item and what you should look for during your review.

## FACE SHEET

Scan this page to find out basic information about the proposal: e.g., the type of project, who the project consultants are, types of materials involved. The project summary found under question 30 should give you a good sense of what the applicant intends to accomplish.

## PROJECT BUDGET

Using your knowledge of similar projects, look over individual items and total project costs. Applicants must justify all costs in their project narratives. Look particularly for justification of consultant fees and travel expenses. Note, however, that consultant fees may vary due to the individual's specialty, geographical location and cost of living.

Applications recommended for funding should have budgets that reflect no more and no less than the total amount necessary to successfully complete the project.

IMLS funds may be used to pay up to one-half the cost of the project. However, applicants occasionally request more than 50% of the total project costs. If you receive such an application, please provide a complete review of it and make a note of the situation in your comments. IMLS staff will resolve the problem.

Applicants submitting an education component are required to submit an additional detailed budget identifying proposed educational activities. You are NOT required to evaluate this education budget (Pages 7.8–7.9)

*Note: See the* 2004 Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines *for applicant instructions on developing the budget.*

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Use the statement of purpose to measure the museum's performance in carrying out its mission. Try to determine if the proposed conservation project is appropriate to the museum's larger purpose.

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

The narrative draws all of the elements of a proposal together in response to the eight questions in the *2004 Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines*. Those questions and the additional instructions are duplicated below. Applicants submitting an education component are required to submit additional narrative responses. You are NOT required to evaluate this education narrative. The education component narrative questions are not listed in this handbook, but may be found in the Application Guidelines on Page 5.6.

1. WHAT IS THE DESIGN OF THE PROJECT?
   Describe
   - project activities in detail
   - goals and objectives of each task and how they will be met
   - amount of time staff and consultants will spend on the project
   - why your schedule of completion is appropriate
   - any intended products (written reports, plans, publications, etc.)
   - plans to protect objects from disruptive elements (e.g., construction dust, movement of objects)

**2a.  WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION METHODS AND WHY ARE THEY CONSERVATIONALLY SOUND?**

*Note: If you submit a training project <u>only</u> answer alternate question 2b, rather than 2a. However, if you submit a project that includes training as a major component, then you must answer both questions 2a and 2b.*

Describe the methods in terms of their
- efficiency
- reliability
- innovativeness (if applicable)
- conformity to currently accepted conservation methods for this type of work (if controversial or unproven conservation techniques are proposed, state why these techniques were chosen)
- safety

**2b.  DESCRIBE YOUR RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED TRAINING CURRICULUM INCLUDING:**
- training  materials
- training  methods
- audience served
- intended benefits for the applicant and trainees
- teaching experience of instructor(s)

**3. WHAT IS THE OBJECT(S), HISTORIC STRUCTURE(S), OR SPECIMEN(S) THAT IS THE FOCUS OF THIS PROJECT?**

Describe objects or specimens involved in this project and their
- types, numbers, and materials
- relevance to the museum's overall collections
- relevance to your institutional mission
- relevance to your local, regional, national or international community

FOR TRAINING PROJECTS OR PROJECTS THAT INCLUDE TRAINING AS A MAJOR COMPONENT ONLY, discuss
- what collections will benefit directly or indirectly from the training (this could include an overview of your entire collection)

**4.  HOW DOES THE PROJECT RELATE TO YOUR MUSEUM'S ONGOING CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES?**

Applications for a general conservation survey should describe the project steps in terms of the museum's previous and current collections care activities.

Applications for other types of projects should describe
- The museum's general housekeeping and day-to-day maintenance activities
- Previous and current conservation activities
- How the project ties into the museum's long range conservation plan
- Accomplishments of any previously awarded IMLS grant(s)
- Implementation of recommendations from general conservation survey, CAP survey or detailed condition survey
- Why this project is your museum's greatest collections care need at this time
- Your museum's overall financial commitment towards conservation

### 5. WHAT ARE THE ANTICIPATED BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT?
Describe
- the benefits of this project for your museum, your museum's audience or the museum field
- how the benefits will be used by your museum and disseminated to your audiences

### 6. HOW WILL THE APPLICANT ENSURE THAT ONGOING MUSEUM FUNCTIONS ARE NOT INHIBITED BY THESE PROJECT ACTIVITIES?
Describe the financial and other resources the museum will contribute to the project to ensure that normal museum functions (including conservation activities) are not disrupted.

### 7. HOW DOES THE PROJECT BUDGET SUPPORT THE PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?
Describe
- how the budget was developed
- how the projected costs were determined
- why the costs are reasonable and appropriate
- cost factors involved in selecting personnel, materials, equipment location, or scheduling
- The source of pricing for materials, supplies, and equipment

### 8. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROJECT PERSONNEL?
Briefly describe the responsiblities of all key project consultants and key project staff including volunteers; explain how each is qualified to do the assigned work, and justify how their commitment of time is integral to the project. Include an updated resume (**of no more than two pages each**) for all personnel identified on this page. Each resume should clearly reflect that person's abilities to carry out the project activities.

For any project personnel that have *not* been chosen (i.e. consultants, interns) summarize the person's required qualifications under question 8 and attach a separate position description.

Do not provide qualifications, resumes or position descriptions for personnel whose role in the project is primarily administrative.

### 9. PROJECT SUMMARY
Provide your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal, highlighting specific points and offering recommendations that will help unfunded applicants to improve future applications. Within the body of your narrative summary also address the following points:
a. Is this project one of the institution's highest conservation priorities;
b. Is this project conceptually, technically, or fiscally appropriate; and
c. Would you fund this project in its entirety, partially or not at all.

*Note: If you recommend funding a project partially, please clearly state what you would support and what you would not support.*

**SCHEDULE OF COMPLETION**

The schedule of completion should help you determine if the applicant has allowed enough time for the project and whether the project activities are logically ordered. The schedule may be in the form of a chart, a paragraph, or an outline, and should cover all of the activities detailed in question one of the narrative. Projects may run for a maximum of two years. Applicants submitting an education component should include education activities on this schedule.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

We require all applicants to submit supplementary documents in support of their proposal.  Depending on the type of project, applicants might submit
■   letters of commitment from project consultants
■   resumes of key project personnel
■   general conservation survey report or CAP report
■   long range conservation plan
■   treatment plans or proposals (for treatment projects)
■   training curricula (for training projects or projects that include a training component)
■   sample survey forms (for general and detailed survey projects)
■   photographs/slides (required for treatment projects)
    Other optional supporting material may include
■   brochures/catalogues
■   collections policies
■   detailed conservation surveys
■   equipment specifications
■   MAP assessments
■   maps/diagrams
■   photographs/slides/videos
■   letters of support

*Note: you can find descriptions of required and suggested supporting documentation for each project type in Part 2 of the* 2004 Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines.

Applicants may support their conservation needs and priorities by means of a general conservation survey/CAP report, long range conservation plan or other statement.

Most often you will see a general conservation survey/CAP report.  Since these reports can be very long, we allow applicants to excerpt the part(s) that relates directly to the proposed project.

Some applicants may send a long range conservation plan along with their general survey/CAP report.  Applicants that do not have a general survey/CAP report may send only a long range conservation plan.  Those without a long range conservation plan may send a letter explaining the importance of their project and how it fits into their overall conservation plans and activities.  You must ask yourself if the report, plan or letter justifies and fully supports the proposed activities.

We have already checked each *original* application to make sure all required supporting documentation is included. Your task is to consider whether the documentation is adequate, appropriate and convincing.  If you think any documentation does not sufficiently support one (or more) of the eight narrative responses, describe the problem in your review of that section.  You should also discuss any general problems with the supporting documentation in the space for summary comments.

# II. Step-by-Step Application Review Instructions

This section of the handbook contains detailed information on how to review a CPS application.

**IMPORTANT!**   Experienced reviewers estimate that it takes at least two hours to evaluate one application (for all of your assigned applications, a total of 14 hours over a six-week period).  If you are a first-time CPS reviewer, you may need even more time.

We recommend the step-by-step reviewing process outlined below.

**CHECK SHIPPING BOX**

1) If you haven't already done so, check your shipping box!  Call or e-mail us (sshwartzman@imls.gov) to let us know that you received your box.  If any of the items on the welcome letter in your folder are missing from the box, we will be happy to send them to you right away.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

2) Review your list of applications to see if there are any potential conflicts of interest.  You have a conflict if:
   - You, your spouse, or minor child are involved with the applicant institution, or in the project described in the application, as a paid consultant or through other financial involvement.
   - The application is presented on behalf of an institution with which you, your spouse or minor child are negotiating future employment.
   - Through prior association as an employee or officer, you have gained knowledge of the applicant which could preclude objective review of its application.  (Past employment does not by itself disqualify you, as long as you can review objectively.)
   **You are required to sign and return the conflict of interest statement.**

Other conflicts may arise if you have served as a CAP surveyor or conservation consultant for an applicant institution or have recently applied for a position at an applicant institution.  We rely on you to determine if you can objectively review an application. You should *never* apply prior knowledge of an institution to your reading of a CPS application.

Once you have reviewed an application, you should never represent the applicant (concerning the application, or any grant that may result from it) in dealings with the Institute of Museum and Library Services or another federal agency.

**APPLICATION COMPLETENESS**

3) Check your applications to make sure that all required information is included.
   We check the original application only.  We do not check every page of each reviewer copy for completeness. *If any application appears to be incomplete, call us immediately.* We will forward the missing material to you.  DO NOT penalize the applicant for information missing in your copy of the application.

**READ APPLICATIONS**

4) Read your applications to develop a feel for the range of responses.
   Before reading your applications, reread the narrative questions and guidelines on pages 5.3–5.5 of the *Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines* booklet.  The listed items represent the types of information you should look for in the applicant's responses and should serve as guideposts for your review.

## EVALUATE APPLICATIONS

5) Read your applications again.  Take notes as you read.  Draft your comments for each of the eight narrative responses.
   - Use your professional knowledge and experience to objectively assess the information
     – you MAY NOT base your evaluation on any prior knowledge of an institution
     – if you question the accuracy of any information, call IMLS to discuss it; DO NOT question the applicant's honesty or integrity in your written comments
   - Consider whether or not this project meets the applicant's highest priority for collections care.
   - Address the applicant's *entire* response to each narrative question
   - Consider a project's strengths *and* weaknesses
     – acknowledge and compliment strengths
     – offer practical suggestions for improving weaknesses
   - Address the panelists—your professional peers
   - Judge the application on its own merits
   - Consider whether the applicant has the resources to successfully complete the project
   - Remember the panelists and the IMLS staff use your comments to help unsuccessful applicants improve their collections care and future applications
     – comments should be easy to read and understand
     – comments should be specific to the individual applicant; vague, general statements are not helpful
     – comments should *analyze* the narrative section of the application; summarizing or  paraphrasing the applicant's own words  will not help the applicant
     – comments should address both positive aspects as well as areas for improvement

## SAMPLE COMMENTS

**See pages 17–21 for sample review comments.**

6) Assign preliminary scores to each narrative section.
   Use a scale of 1 through 7
   1 =lowest; 7 = highest (see scoring definitions on page 14)
   - Use whole numbers only
   - do not use fractions, decimals, zeros, or more than one number.

   We suggest that you use the *Start With 4* method to assign scores.  If all field reviewers adopt this same approach, CPS panelists will see greater consistency in the use of our scoring definitions.  If you have questions please contact us at **(202) 606-8539**.

   IMPORTANT!  To help applicants understand and benefit from your reviews, make sure that your scores accurately reflect your written comments.

## ASSIGN SCORES: START WITH 4

To *Start With 4*
- ■ Finish drafting your narrative comments
  - – Make sure that your comments accurately reflect your opinions
- ■ **4 = adequate (provides adequate support for project activities)**
  - – Consider a score of 4 to represent an *adequate* range of project feasibility—think of 4 as your starting point.
- ■ Adjust up or down from 4 according to your written comments.  If the project seems
  - – adequate or average—i.e., neither particularly strong nor particularly weak, but somewhere in the middle—retain the 4;
  - – a little better than average, assign a 5;
  - – much better than average, assign a 6;
  - – minimally acceptable, drop down from a 4 to a 3;
  - – inadequate, choose a 2.
  - – Reserve a score of 1 for what appear to be overall *extremely* poor projects and a score of 7 for *exceptionally* good projects.
- ■ Be fair and objective
  - – Applications are not ranked by the raw scores you assign but by the relative performance of each application compared to all others.  Awarding only high scores will not benefit those applicants; awarding only low scores will not penalize those applicants.

7)  As you review, please keep the following three technical issues in mind: project eligibility, type face, application format.  DO NOT consider them when determining your scores, however.  We will assign penalties as needed.

## ELIGIBILITY

We determine an institution's eligibility for CPS funds by reading the responses on the Grant Processing Information Sheet, 7.14 #1-13.  You may read about eligibility requirements on pages 1.4-1.5 of the *Grant Application and Guidelines* booklet.  If you feel that a particular project does not meet the IMLS CPS eligibility requirements please contact the Office of Museum Services immediately.   DO NOT under any circumstances contact an applicant directly.

## TYPESIZE AND FORMAT

The application does not provide a form for the narrative part of the application. We allow applicants to divide up the space for narrative responses as they wish as long as all of the questions are addressed and in the order indicated in the application guidelines- not to exceed six pages.  A minimum one-quarter inch margin should be left on the sides and bottom of the page.

We also require applicants to use a typesize that measures no more than six lines per vertical inch and to use standard spacing between letters.

Please use your common sense when judging typesize or page format.  We developed these rules primarily to help reviewers.  You don't need to actually measure the type; if you can read the text without eye strain, it probably meets our specifications.
  If you do see a problem, however,
- ■ Call IMLS
- ■ Review the application.  DO NOT lower an applicant's score because of reduced type or reformatting.
- ■ DO NOT note the problem on your review sheet itself, but rather attach a separate note for IMLS only.

We will assign penalties as needed.

**REVIEW YOUR WORK**

8) Review your draft comments and preliminary scores.

When you are finished, proofread your reviews. *A review with even one missing score or comment cannot be accepted by the online review system.* Adjust your scores, if necessary, to more accurately reflect your written evaluation.

■ Adjust them as necessary; scores should support comments and comments should justify scores.

**WRITE SPECIFIC COMMENTS AND ASSIGN SCORES**

9) Type your final comments and scores (for narrative sections 1-8 plus summary) on your online review sheets. For each application you need to complete an online review containing:

■ written comments about the applicant's narrative responses
■ a corresponding score for each response
■ summary comments about the project's strengths and weaknesses, your funding recommendation, and score.

*Note: make use of all the space provided on the online review sheets*

**THE ONLINE REVIEW PROCESS**

We strongly encourage all reviewers to use the online review process. It is easy to do. All you need is internet access. There are no review sheets to type up on a typewriter or hand-write, or hard-to-read computer diskettes, or sheets that you have to reformat on your personal computer. Further, you don't have to fax your reviews to us and when completed we can print out a nice clean copy to forward to our panelists. Just follow these steps:

Your login is: your e-mail address that is on file with IMLS

Your password is: password

When you log in and create your user account, you will need to create a new password. The instructions for creating and submitting your reviews will be at your fingertips. When you visit the site, there is a hotlink for technical questions. These questions will be sent directly to our computer technicians that are working with us to design this system. If you have other questions about reviewing, please contact the program office at (202) 606-8539. When you have completed assigning scores and giving comments for each application assigned to you, you will submit the entire review to IMLS. Then, please remember to print a copy of each completed review to keep for your files.

## SELECTING SCORES

*After* you write your comments, select an appropriate score from 1 to 7 (1=lowest; 7=highest) for each of the eight narrative responses using the IMLS scoring definitions that follow.  Enter the scores on your online review sheets. Your typed comments and corresponding scores should always support each other.

The definitions of the numerical scores are:

SCORE    DEFINITION

1           Applicant's response provides insufficient information for evaluation.
2           Applicant's response provides inadequate support for the proposed project activities.
3           Applicant's response provides minimal support for the proposed project activities.
4           Applicant's response provides adequate support for the proposed project activities.
5           Applicant's response provides good support for the proposed project activities.
6           Applicant's response provides superior support for the proposed project activities.
7           Applicant's response provides exceptional support for the proposed project activities.

### DO THE APPLICANTS READ YOUR REVIEW SHEETS?

In most cases we will provide applicants with both their field review sheets and panel summaries.  No identifying information will be provided.  Applicants use this information to strengthen their proposals for resubmission at a later time.  Therefore, your comments are extremely important to the panel reviewers, IMLS staff, *and* unfunded applicants.

### REVIEW SHEETS

In addition to strongly encouraging all field reviewers to use the online review system, we have made a few important changes to the review sheet.  You will still be required to provide comments and corresponding scores for the eight criteria listed in the *2004 Conservation Project Support Grant Application and Guidelines*; however, you will no longer be required to complete the check boxes that asked you if a proposed project was conceptually, technically, or fiscally appropriate, or whether or not the project seemed to meet the museum's highest conservation needs/priorities.  We expect you will address these issues in your detailed and summary comments.  **This year, we ask that within your summary comments, you identify whether or not you would like to fund a particular project** *fully*, *partially*, **or** *not at all*.  Of course, your summary comments will support your recommendation which in turn will help guide the panel in their final decision-making process.  In addition, we ask that you **provide a score (1-7) for this summary section, a score that best sums up your opinion of a proposal**.  So, rather than eight scores, you will provide a total of nine scores with the ninth summary score representing your overall opinion of that application.

Your online reviews are confidential and can only be viewed by IMLS staff.

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT

10) Your overall assessment should correspond to your specific narrative comments and scores.
   ■   Partial Funding Option: If you do not want to support the project in its entirety but feel that a portion of the project can be financially and technically segmented out and accomplished without compromising the project goals.  Clearly identify in your comments which project activities you wish to support and which project activities you do not wish to support.

11) Sign your reviewer contract and fax to IMLS along with your completed ACH form, conflict of interest form, and reviewer questionnaire.

12) You must fax back the enclosed Automated Clearing House (ACH) form and reviewer contract for your services.  Payment is done electronically and the ACH form must be completed in its entirety, even if submitted in a prior year with the identical banking information.

13) In addition to your ACH form and reviewer contract, please fax us your completed reviewer questionnaire (two pages, double-sided) and your conflict of interest statement.  Please fax to:

<div align="center">

202/606-0010

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Should you decide to use a private carrier rather than fax your reviewer contract, ACH form, questionnaire, and conflict of interest statement, please send to the following address:

<div align="center">

IMLS
Office of Museum Services
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Room 609
Washington, DC  20506
Attention:  CPS Reviewer Information

</div>

Please do not send this material via the USPS as we are still experiencing lengthy mail delays.  If you fax your materials then you DO NOT need to send us your originals.

■ MEET THE IMLS REVIEW DEADLINE!  January 5, 2004
■ Don't forget to fill out your reviewer questionnaire (you may send it a few days later if you wish); it's your chance to let us know what you think about your review experience.

14) Keep your applications and a copy of your review sheets until March 1, 2004 (in case of loss in shipment or questions from IMLS staff).
■ Maintain confidentiality of all applications that you review.
■ After March 1, 2004, destroy the applications (you may keep optional attachments such as catalogs or brochures).

You will have six weeks to complete all of the steps described above.  We have provided you with a schedule of completion  (see page 22) to help you pace yourself through the assigned tasks.  Please complete your work on time!  The entire process depends on promptness from our field reviewers.

# <u>Notes</u>

# III. Sample Field Review Comments, Non-living Collections

**SCORE**

Below are examples of the types of comments that panelists find helpful.  We have selected these comments because 1) they are detailed and specific; 2) many refer back to the applicant's narrative response; and 3) all have been assigned appropriate, corresponding scores.  Please try to provide the same level of detail and specificity in your field review comments.  You will have different issues to comment on for the various applications you review.

**7**    **1. PROJECT DESIGN**

This is an exemplary application for a detailed condition survey.  The project is well-organized, clearly fits within the long-range conservation plan and priorities of the institution, and continues a methodological survey of the entire collection that was begun with an IMLS general survey in 1998.  The project design demonstrates a clear understanding of what makes a successful survey project, informed by their recent experience with the same conservators used in the 2001 detailed survey, which examined half the collection.  The narrative covers every important detail of logistics, describing the tasks, timing and responsibilities clearly.

**4**    **2. (A)CONSERVATION METHODS OR (B) PROPOSED TRAINING CURRICULUM**

The strength of this project is the careful integration of the consultant conservators into the process during the early planning of the new museum addition.  Even so, it is problematic that important details about the storage furniture and supplies to be purchased are lacking.  Will the Steel Fixture cabinets be vented or not?  What type of gasketing will be used with the Steel Fixture cabinets?  Also, it would be very nice to have some description of the HVAC system to be installed in the new storage area.  It would also be nice to hear something about how they plan to protect collections during the construction phase.  There is also little justification or much of a description given for the myriad of supplies to be purchased for this project, although most appear to be appropriate.  The addition of the training seminar on handling and storing framed paper artifacts is a nice touch and should integrate well into the rehousing aspect of this project.

**4**    **2. (A)CONSERVATION METHODS OR (B) PROPOSED TRAINING CURRICULUM**

The Conservation Training Curriculum (including appendix) is well thought out and appropriate.  It is not clear, however, if students would get training in methods for photographing specimens for archival purposes (especially digital photography) or in electronic database applications, both of which are indispensable tools for modern conservation.  Perhaps these topics are included under "inventory and documentation," but they are not identified explicitly.

**4**    **3. IMPORTANCE OF THE OBJECTS/STRUCTURES/SPECIMENS**

While the importance of their collection in general is nicely described and their value to a national and international audience made clear, a more detailed description of the actual artifacts involved in this rehousing project is lacking along with any kind of basic inventory of the collections affected.  They imply that all the collections currently stored in the Academy Building and Maintenance Barn will be relocated into the new facility, but his is never actually stated outright, and one wonders just how much they can fit into a 1,000 square foot building.  As they seem to actively collect, what provision do they make for the storage of future collections?

**SCORE**

**4**

**4. RELATION TO ONGOING CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES**

The case is made that the conservation of these four high priority objects is appropriate now because "appropriate storage/exhibition space" is now available in the Carriage Room at the institution after what appears to have been years of waiting. While it seems clear that the new exhibition conditions will indeed be superior to those in the cave in which the objects have been previously stored, the actual environmental conditions in this new space are not actually described at all.

**1**

**5. ANTICIPATED BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT**

No case is made for short term immediate benefits beyond the inventory that will verify specimen locations in the computer data base. The proposal does not demonstrate immediate need. The use of the dry or wet marine invertebrate collection is not well documented in the proposal. Are the type specimens for 60 species collected in the offshore benthic survey studied by visitors? Is there a plan to hire a curator of marine invertebrates to allow for in-house study of these collections? The use and availability of the dry collection to the scientific community should be documented in the proposal.

**2**

**6. ONGOING MUSEUM FUNCTIONS**

The question is not really answered. It is stated that conservation will take place off-site so that it does not interfere with museum functions. However, there is no discussion of how matting, framing, storage, photography, or paperwork (which museum staff will be responsible for) will impact museum functions.

**5**

**7. PROJECT BUDGET**

The Museum requests 50% of the overall costs for the conservation of the four volumes as proposed by the Northeast Document Conservation Center. The overall cost estimates are reasonable and the project timetable is practical. The institution is dedicated to the conservation of its collections as exhibited through budgeted matching funds to see the completion of this project. I would have like to have seen an itemized breakdown between materials and labor, and how various staff bill based on levels of experience.

**3**

**8. QUALIFICATIONS OF PROJECT PERSONNEL**

The Museum staff seems appropriate, but reliance on an unspecified contractor for all the HVAC expertise is very unwise. While a contractor with a long time commitment to the institution would be one thing, reliance on an unspecified contractor without an architect or engineer, nor a formal design, will likely cause a problematic and ultimately ineffective project. Ms. Smith's credentials, as they specifically apply to this project, should have been mentioned.

**3**

**9. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

The goal to provide a training program is an excellent one, and the location would provide opportunities not found in many locations. However, the responses to several questions do not provide enough detail and clarity to determine whether the priority of the program is training or getting fossils prepared. There does not appear to be enough substance to the training program to warrant funding.

The project would be strengthened substantially if there were clear objectives for the educational agenda of the program; if there was a more detailed indication of the concepts to be presented, discussed, and experienced in the lab setting; if there was an indication of how interns will be evaluated. There is so much content that could be covered, to the intern's benefit, that it is not clear why they are hired for only 16 hours/week. If they are to be involved in other activities on a scheduled basis, then that should be substantiated (both what they would be doing, why, and how much time). Fewer interns might make it a better training environment for them.

# Sample Field Review Comments, Living Collections

**SCORE**

**4**

**1. PROJECT DESIGN**

The project designed is a systematic approach to complete a base map for the lower garden areas, complete the Plant Record Database, and map and label the specimens in the garden. The tools they propose to use include AutoCAD, Access, and label machine and Vision software. These will help the applicant to achieve their intended goals. However, Activity I is unclear. The land survey (2001) includes infrastructure, trees, boundaries, and markers. This map, with a 2' contour can be easily converted into AutoCAD format and is ready to merge with maps of other areas of the garden. The description presented here is not detailed enough to understand why it takes 80 hours to format the data.

**6**

**2. (A) CONSERVATION METHODS OR (B) PROPOSED TRAINING CURRICULUM**

A key component to the success of this work lies in the use of positive reinforcement training to gain the cooperation of the subject animals. This renders the collection of cytological samples and even ultrasound records minimally invasive and virtually stress free for the bears. Thus, much higher sampling rates will be possible, increasing the reliability of the results. The video monitoring will provide easily collected, standardized behavioral data. Scoring video data is difficult at best, but having all of the scoring performed by a single individual or small group trained by a single person should greatly increase the reliability of the video records. All of this increases the probability of the production of highly reliable new data that will be of tremendous benefit in the management of this seriously declining population.

**5**

**2. (A) CONSERVATION METHODS OR (B) PROPOSED TRAINING CURRICULUM**

Both the American and the Asian training components offer essential and integrated, yet very different, tools that should assist the separate audiences to effectively implement their respective applied tasks. While experienced trainers are critically important, additional capacity building could be achieved through training in-country instructors to carry on future training workshops. Hence, a "train-the-trainer" concept built-in component.

**5**

**3. IMPORTANCE OF THE OBJECTS/STRUCTURES/SPECIMENS**

*Cyclura pinguis* is an extremely rare, endangered and important (both taxonomically and ecologically) iguana. It is under imminent threat of extinction. These facts are well explained in the narrative. It is a high priority species with the IUCN Iguana Specialist Group as well as the AZA Rock Iguana SSP. The only breeding group in captivity is at this Zoo.

**2**

**4. RELATION TO ONGOING CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES**

There is no indication that this project will enhance the ongoing activities other than as training for students during the project. The financial commitment to conservation activities has also not been demonstrated. While this may be the greatest collection's care need, it does not appear that the arboretum know what it will do with it on a day-to-day basis.

**SCORE**

**3**

### 5. ANTICIPATED BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

Although Addax are endangered there is no evidence that Assisted Reproduction Technologies (ART) are needed now or might be needed in the future. Addax breed well in captivity and there is no reason to believe that the captive population or a reintroduction could not be sustained through natural reproduction. It is unclear whether these results would ever have direct application to Addax management or conservation.

**5**

### 6. ONGOING MUSEUM FUNCTIONS

Re-covering all its indoor flooring will clearly disrupt the normal elephant-related operations, both from a husbandry and viewing public perspective. Having been through past major renovation projects, however, they appear confident that the disturbances can be kept to a minimum. They propose a complex system of cross coordination among the zoo staff, outside contractors, and volunteers. The complexity of the project would argue against the probability of success were it not for their reported past history of successful experience with this particular contractor.

**4**

### 7. PROJECT BUDGET

Costs for the actual renovation of existing space are minimal as a percentage of total budget requested. While bid specifications were not detailed, projections of time for construction appear realistic. One full-time aquarist per animal, however, in addition to 5 hours of a training consultant per week seems a generous allotment of time devoted to only 2 individual seals. In general, operant conditioning training sessions for pinnipeds comprise less than 1 full hour per day, and can be even less if simply maintaining behaviors rather than learning new activities.

**3**

### 8. QUALIFICATIONS OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

Some exceptionally well-qualified persons have been assembled for this project. Dr. Smith's responsibilities are not elucidated. It is unfortunate that some level of background work has not been established in the host countries. How are we to know that qualified persons are available and willing to participate in this project? It is not clear who will be ultimately responsible for collection of samples in the field.

**7**

### 9. SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

I find this proposal to be very strong. The design of the project itself, with its varying combinations of females with a familiar or unfamiliar male, or no male, etc. is very well thought out and contributes to the internal validity of the study as a whole. These investigators are highly qualified to conduct this work and the proposed collection of multiple measures of reproductive status concurrently should constitute a major contribution to the reproductive and assisted reproduction literatures. Since these animals are not reproducing on their own, the efforts to provide assisted reproduction may indeed be this sun bear species' last chance at survival.

# FOUR-WEEK SCHEDULE OF COMPLETION

**ACTIVITY 1**
Check box for all materials, call if problems; check each application for completeness

**ACTIVITY 2**
Read: *Reviewer Handbook, CPS Application and Guidelines* booklet

**ACTIVITY 3**
Evaluation of applications: 1st read to develop feel for range of responses

**ACTIVITY 4**
2nd read-through, go to online reviews, type comments and assign scores

**ACTIVITY 5**
Review comments and scores; adjust as necessary

**ACTIVITY 6**
Complete and return ACH Form, reviewer contract, signed reviewer questionnaire, and signed conflict of interest statement

**ACTIVITY 7**
Keep applications for 90 days, and then destroy

# REMINDERS—
# FOR REVIEWING CPS APPLICATIONS

**WHEN STARTING...**

■ FIRST—Read the application guidelines and this handbook!

■ Call or e-mail IMLS *immediately* if you have any questions or problems at **(202) 606-8539** or **sshwartzman@imls.gov**

■ Look carefully for conflicts of interest with your assigned applications. Call us if you see even the potential for conflict.

■ Budget your time. Each application takes at least 2 hours!

**WHEN REVIEWING...**

■ When reviewing, ask yourself
—Does this project address the institution's documented highest conservation needs/priorities?
—Is the project appropriate for this institution and these collections?
—Is the project feasible?

■ Please call us if any required materials are missing.

■ Write your detailed comments to help both applicants and panel reviewers—your peers.

■ Use the online review system to type your comments and scores.

**WHEN COMPLETING YOUR ONLINE REVIEWS...**

■ Online Reviews must include:
—narrative comments
—numerical scores
—an overall assessment of the application, including a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses, and a funding recommendation

■ Complete your online reviews by January 5, 2004.

■ Fax your conflict of interest statement and questionnaire to (202) 606-0010.

■ Fax your ACH Form and signed reviewer contract to (202) 606-0010.

■ Peer review works, thanks to you!